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Book Review of Unni Wikan, *In Honor of Fadime: Murder & Shame*. Translated by Anna Paterson. 2008 [2003]. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 305 pp. \$24

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Introduction

The writer Unni Wikan, a Norwegian by nationality is a social anthropologist who has worked at various universities a professor of social anthropology. Wikan has also worked as a consultant with international organisations such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Program (WFP).

In this book, the author tried to explore Fadime's (a Swedish girl of Turkish origin) honour killing case under the light of different socio- cultural traditions and immigration issues. Honour killing is one of an extreme act of violence against women which highlights their subordinated position within patriarchal societies. Since last few decades Anthropologists, social scientists, journalists and NGO's in different parts of the world have started to raise this issue seriously through exploring case studies, writing books, articles and several projects.

According to Human Rights Watch (2001), honour killings are acts of vengeance. These types of killings are usually carried out by male members against female members of the family. These female members have been deemed to bring dishonour upon the family. Honour killing goes across various cultures where family honour is extremely important and women are considered as a keeper of family honour.

In recent years, the issue of honour killings has risen to prominence in Europe among the diaspora community (Dogan, 2016). However, mostly honour killings are argued to have their origin in patriarchal societies where traditional, cultural, and social norms have been used to explain the occurrences of honour killings. Unni Wikan tried to explore this brutal act while examining a case study of a Turkish girl Fadime Sahindal who was murdered by her father at the age of 25 in the year 2002 on her visit to her home town of Uppsala. Fadime belonged to a Kurdish family that emigrated from Turkey and was living in Sweden for the last twenty years. Fadime fell in love with a Swedish man Patrick Lindesjo and refused her arranged marriage. This act was highly unacceptable by her father and brothers. She was accused of refusing her families traditions when she stood by her love Patrik in spite of going for forced marriage. She was labelled as a bad girl in her family who had brought shame and destroyed

their family honour. She left her home and received life threats from her father and brothers. At last, she was killed by her father in front of her mother and younger sisters. Her family took away her life to wash the shame and humiliation that was tagged to them because of her refusal to follow the family traditions. Killing her seemed a way to restore lost honour for the family.

The major focus of the writers' analysis is based on the life of immigrants living in European and Western countries like Sweden. These immigrants not only have to struggle for their social integration, but they also have to defend their native culture. In these situations, a woman suffers a lot and in this case, it was Fadime.

The book is written in simple language that includes various chapters which offer its reader to critically analyse Fadime's killing. Unni Wikan has tried to raise all the questions that can arise in a reader's mind. Such questions include the insufficient Swedish policies for the social integration of immigrants and the way the culture of Turkish community was blamed for her murder. Unni Wikan drew her analysis after interviewing friends and family members of Fadime. She also attended two court trials of her father.

Fadime story is all about her individual rights, about her strength, fearlessness and her love for life. Unni Wikan not only explains the sufferings of Fadime but also touches the agony and pain of her family because of this conflict. Fadime's family lived in Sweden for about 20 years. They were Kurdish and migrated from Turkey/Upsala when Fadime was only seven years old. From the research, it has been found that the family was Muslims but were not strict followers. She was raised under a totally different atmosphere, unlike her native country where women's subordination and cases like honour killing were not unusual. The social circle of this family in Sweden was immense as lots of family members lived there. Fadime's father had worked for 16 years in Sweden.

Discussion

This case study had been discussed within various dimensions in seven parts of the book. In an early section of the book, Wikan presented a discussion to understand the lives of Swedish immigrants while presenting case studies of Sara and Pela. These women were also victims of honour killing. In next section, the writer discussed Fadime's case and explained honour and shame of the community and its association between with controlling women's sexuality and decision making. She highlighted that poor

integration and inclusion amongst immigrants in western countries bring such clashes. These incidents are linked to women's freedom, and there is a dire need to solve these conflicts.

Unni Wikan also differentiates between honour Killing and crime of passions. According to her, the agenda behind both the killings is different. Honour killing is all about controlling women, under the structural systems and norms of society. She raised an intriguing point that honour killing indicates the dominant ideology of following collective norms over individual choice. Wikan deliberately avoids mentioning any particular religion or culture but on the other hand, she explains a few more case studies of other women who happened to be Muslims.

Wikan has repeatedly given too sweeping statements to highlight 'Exile' in her discussion as an option to prevent honour killing. I do not find this option as a solution since, there are lots of cases where women who ran away and hid from their families in such conditions where Fadime was caught in. Their immediate ancestors or male members of their family haunted and killed them even after many years. The solution is always in discussion rather than running away from a problem, which usually could increase the urge of revenge for ruining the family name and honour (as associated with these women's).

In the last two parts of this book Wikan tried to convince her readers that this brutal killing by her father could be justified with the theology of emotions and love. She tried to find out some humanity in this brutal honour killing while giving value to the emotions and feelings of her family. This is disturbing because it is true that the family members might feel rejection and dishonour from their communities but they could choose some other options than killing their daughters or sisters. No law could support this act; no one has the right to kill a woman.

I agree with Wikan's point of view stating that it is not any particular religion like Islam that is responsible for such killings rather it's the culture and the power of collective groups which promotes and clear pathways for such brutality. Wikan argues that Fadime and her family were victims of inhuman traditions. However, in my analysis, it is Fadime who was victimised multiple times, the decision was in her father's hand, and she was judged in her family court within the boundaries of their cultural mores. I agreed when Wikan said that Individuals right and integrity come first then that of culture.

The book offers solutions to the gaps related to law and structural issues responsible for this brutal act. Labelling honour killings and honour crimes could lead changes in policies and laws about violence against women. I agree with her explanation that most of the immigrant girls live with a risk of forced marriages. Their refusal to these marriages leads to honour killings. The girls should be given the right

and freedom of choice. Cultural integration of immigrants by the western world can be the solution to minimise such incidents.

Honour killing is a form of extremism, and it cannot be justified by any reason, the responsible person should be punished by law. Wikan's practical work out along with theoretical discussions related to honour killing in this book should be taken into account by policy makers especially for the diasporic communities in the West.

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Fareeha Ali, 2016

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